Public Health Improvement Partnership
Public Health Information Technology Committee
Wednesday, January 28, 2004
9:00am – 3:30pm
Wyndham Hotel, SeaTac, WA

18118 Pacific Highway South, Phone: (206) 244-6666, Fax: (206) 248-6065
http://www.wyndham.com/hotels/SEAST/main.wnt

Co-Chairs: Ed Dzedzy, Lincoln ; Frank Westrum, DOH

Members: ~~Joan Brewster, DOH~~; Kathy Carson, Sea-King; Melanie Dalton, Kitsap; ~~Jo Hoffman, DOH~~; Teresa, Jennings, DOH; Bryant Karras, UW; Sherri McDonald, Thurston; Jim Minty, Snohomish; Patrick O'Carroll, HHS-Region X; Patty Schwendenan, Sea-King; Torney Smith, Spokane; Greg Story, Chelan-Douglas; Brent Veenstra, Sea-King; Carol Villers, NE Tri; ~~Jim O. White, DOH~~. (Strikeout = member absent from meeting).

Staff: Marie Flake, DOH

Guests: Scott Pierce, Tacoma-Pierce; Cliff Schiller, DOH; Margaret Shields, UW-NWCPHP; Janice Taylor, DOH.

Topic	Description
Updates	Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) – Teresa Jennings. See handouts. The workgroup includes LHJ representation from King, Pierce, and Spokane. The vision for this system is that funeral home directors, physicians, health officers, etc. could access via the web, using "roaming digital certificate", to register a death. The data would be transferred to DOH each night and available the following day. The system will use a form signing tool like that used in "Turbo Tax". The "Fact of Death" portion of the system is of interest to the Social Security Administration (they are also providing some funding for the system), the Washington Secretary of State, and the Office of the Insurance Commissioner related to benefit payments, and others, and thus, there are many stakeholders. The system will be piloted in Pierce County approximately June 2005. The implementation phase is planned to be one year long. Discussion: Link outreach to corners, physicians, etc. regarding EDRS with previous outreach / training efforts to improve the quality of data. Borrow from these outreach methods and include training to improve the quality of data when training on the EDRS. Personal Health Services Document System – Kathy Carson. Karen Martin, a national leader in the use of the standardized language called the Omaha system met with the workgroup on this project. There is concern that PHND may be too far out in front of the other First Steps providers in valuing standardized language and having researched and selected the Omaha system. Kathy will be presenting to the other First Steps providers on February 19th in order to try and get everyone on the same page. Deborah Ahern, Thurston County is the project director and Thurston is in the process of hiring a part-time person, using First Steps funds, to develop the paper documentation system and user interface for the computer application. Kathy recommended the development of a parallel IT workgroup for this project to address what kind of system, what kind of security concerns it would bring up, what existing applications could be integrated and whether they should be integrated or not; etc.; and to seek funding for building the system. Kathy referenced a recent National Library of Medicine (NLN) grant to Public Health - Seattle-King Co regarding a data warehouse. Bryant suggested additionally linking with the UW who has received a number of NLN grants and also has a grant with SeaKing for an Academic Health Department. It was agreed to form a subgroup to discuss this. **Action:** Form a subcommittee and convene a meeting to include: Brayant Karras, Kathy Carson, Jim Minty, Frank Westrum, and others to be determined by Bryant (i.e. Neil Rambo) to discuss funding of the IT portion of this project.

	WEDSS – Frank Westrum CDRS – This application which is built on the foundation of PHIMS, should be ready the first week of February. Will deploy as needed should SARS arise. Deployment team to include one IT person and Epi staff. Authentication - userid and password. Working with SeaKing for a coordinated approach, but the SeaKing system has additional functionality (largely around legal and quarantine issues) that there has not been time to incorporate in this version of CDRS. May include these in the future. Discussion: While we may hope that SARS does not become an issue in WA, and thus not need to use this application, we need to be clear about how we frame this issue. It is about being ready and prepared. Thus, we should plan to drill on the use of CDRS. Bryant is familiar with a CDRS application used in Wyoming on handheld devices. PHIMS – pilots in three LHJs are underway. They are finding issues and making corrections, especially with the inputting of text comments. The PHIMS User group is in the process of reorganizing itself now that PHIMS is transitioning from development to implementation. ELR – work continues. WA Secures – New DOH project manager, Robert Shield, to start February 2. Tim Boreman will continue to work on the technical side. The vendor recently re-installed the application on DOH computers. DOH will pilot the application with the epi folks. Discussion: Where are we at regarding role definitions and the many business process decisions? PODRS – There is interest in the application from many sectors. There are many unresolved legal issues. Discussion: Has DOH looked at the IRIS system developed/used(?) by Stevens Hospital? State EMD may be looking into IRIS. Frank is interested in seeing an LHJ pilot test IRIS. **Action**: Provide the committee with updated information addressing the question above on WA Secures and PODRS.
IT Assessment	Frank Westrum - Discussion regarding the data and where to go from here. Discussion: The data is aging. Does it need to be updated? Self-edit? Hire a contractor to update? Format – people don't seem to be using the web access much. Is a hardcopy summary report needed to share with LBOH? Others? Some of the data people want is not included – i.e. who is using what for accounts payable? Or contact databases? The data is most useful when considering a "new" system. Since new systems are purchased infrequently, the data is probably fairly current. Navigation through the data was difficult. If people aren't using the data, maybe it isn't needed and we should just drop it. Conclusion: The data is ok for now. Should do more to encourage people to use the web data and re-evaluate at the next PHIT meeting. **Action:** Marie to draft quarterly message from Frank to each survey respondent and include: indication of the last time the respondent accessed or updated their data; business drivers and/or ideas for how to use the data; web link and where/how to get password if it has been forgotten. Include on the April 28th PHIT agenda.
Web Conferencing	Margaret Shields - Description of effort at UW/NWC to acquire, use, and make available to the six state NW region, a web conferencing system. See handouts. While largely an internal process, the UW is seeking some input from partners. They will be making a selection from among three potential vendors any day now. Most likely they will select a "hosted" system with a 6 month – 1 year contract, with 75 seat licenses. Discussion: Focus on the basics. Minimal bells & whistles. Having minimal downloads required to access the system is of higher importance than having more bells & whistles. Need options for more that 75 seats for any given program. Macintosh compatibility is a non-issue in

	Washington since Snohomish has already transitioned many machines to PC and plans to continue this process. Don't let perfection get in the way of doing business. Folk are eager to use this system. Bandwidth on the IGN is an issue. Thus, use minimal animation in programs to be delivered. Be conscious of how colors and fonts <u>display</u> when designing a program. **Action:** Include a demo on the April 28th PHIT agenda.
Learning Management System	Janice Taylor - Learning Session. See handouts. Discussion: Don't prohibit data entry of courses pending identification of competencies. Need flexibility in the system – i.e. don't require a pre/post assessment of mandatory trainings like drivers education. Who is included in the LMS? While working with partners (i.e. EMD, Hospitals, etc.) in the planning and development, the vision is to phase in participants, starting with state and local public health first. Link the LMS with PODRS where possible.
Technology Show and Tell	Materials shared are available on the PHIT web site.
E-commerce	Ed Dzedzy - Sharing & Discussion. Some LHJs seem to have interest in developing the ability to accept payments via the web and other non-cash methods that allow for payment without coming to the HD in-person. Some have had initial conversations with DIS and DIS contacted DOH to ask about the possibility of a systems approach rather than one LHJ at a time. Conclusion: We need more and clearer information on this subject and what DIS can offer. **Action:** Marie to contact DIS and request more information and whether or not DIS has had conversations with counties / WSAC on this topic. Consider including a presentation and discussion by DIS on the April 28th PHIT agenda.
Digital Certificates & Data Access Stewards	Frank Westrum – Update and Discussion. Due to past history and various initiatives, DOH has previously held both encryption and authentication to a very high standard, including the use of digital certificates for authentication. The time and cost involved in using digital certificated has lead to reconsideration. Currently a working group inside DOH is re-evaluating this. While the high standard will likely continue regarding encryption, options are being explored for various levels of and methods of authentication (i.e. instead of using a 3rd party provider, Digital Signature Trust, maybe DOH could issue digital certificates, valid only for DOH applications, based on that fact that an individuals employer vouches for their identity). However, it seems that first a policy decision is needed on what level of authentication is needed for specific or all public health applications. Then an appropriate method can be selected. One principle being considers is that of "highest common denominator" – i.e. if an individual has a high level of authentication (i.e. a digital certificate), it should also be relevant for applications that require a lower level of authentication without additional steps. Coordination of digital certificate requests / issuances – The DOH digital certificate coordinator is: Angela Agnesani. Phone: 360-236-4474. angela.agnesani@doh.wa.gov. In addition to establishing system-wide standards for encryption and authentication, the issue of who authorizes an individual to access a given dataset or application needs work. On the DOH side, this falls to programs. On the LHJ side, it seems that often the director may be unaware of who on their staff has access to which datasets / applications. This poses a challenge to assuring that appropriate staff have access to appropriate datasets / applications as staff change roles, are hired or terminated. After authorizing access for individuals, maintaining a current list and communicating this information to the appropriate DOH contact in a timely fashion, is also important and seems to be related to the evolving concept of a "data access steward".

	An attempt at some simple definitions for the non-techy: Encryption – data is encrypted for transmission so that even if it is intercepted or just plain sent to the wrong place, it can not be read or interpreted. Authentication – validates that a user is who they say they are. There are many method Authorizing access – a process by which the appropriate individuals are granted access to the appropriate datasets / application, for the appropriate time (i.e. access is stopped when the individual changes roles or is terminated from employment), by the appropriate supervisor. Conclusion: Continue discussion at next meeting. **Action:** Frank & Ed to present this issue for consideration at the PHIP Steering Committee meeting on February 4. Marie to check with DOH program regarding current practice for establishing who at any given LHJ is authorized, by whom, to access given datasets / applications (regardless of requirements for digital certificates or not). Include on the April 28t^th PHIT agenda.
Minimum Requirements: Security	Cliff Schiller - Presentation and Discussion – New Tool for Blocking Spam. See handouts.
Communicating between DOH and LHJ IT staff	Frank Westrum – Discussion. There is interest in encouraging more sharing of information, resources and discussion among IT staff. Currently one resources is the IT Assessment where some individuals check to identify others working on a specific topic, and then contact them for information. Conclusion: A listserv seems to be the easiest and most accessible option to experiment with. Determining who should be included on such a listserv is a bit challenging – what is the proper mix of tech and systems / policy folks? Will probably lean more toward tech staff initially. Will query the LHJ directors to identify staff from their agency to be subscribed. **Action:** Marie to set up the listserv via DIS. Marie to draft message from Frank, to LHJ Directors requesting names of who should be subscribed.
IT Summit	Frank Westrum - Brainstorming & Discussion to advise co-chairs and the subcommittee. Conclusion: Not enough time to fully discuss. **Action:** Marie to float draft statement of purpose to subcommittee members for comment. Subcommittee to meet by phone to discuss and determine a work plan. Subcommittee: Kathy Carson, Melanie Dalton, Mike Davisson, Jim Minty, Brent Veenstra, Carol Villers.
April Agenda Items	Electronic communication tools (WA Secures, Catalyst, others…) IT Assessment – is the data being used? Security: Authentication and Authorizing Access E-commerce – presentation by DIS Electronic Death Reporting System? Technology Show & Tell – make this a standing agenda item

PHIT Communication Tools: http://www.doh.wa.gov/pip/InfoTech/default.htm
Future Meeting Dates: 2004: January 28, April 28, July 28, October 27
Routine Meeting Date/Time: Quarterly – 1st Month of the Quarter; 4th Wednesday of the Month.
Routine Meeting Place: Wyndham Hotel, SeaTac, WA